

IRTS Radio News Bulletin Sunday April 22nd 2001

Spring Counties Contest

Despite the unfortunate cancellation of the Portable sections of the Spring Counties Contest this year due to the foot and mouth situation, many stations were active from their fixed locations.

Members of South Dublin Radio Club participated in the Counties Contest. Three separate stations were set up around Dublin, including the SDR club station at the club's QTH in Rathfarnham. Despite the absence of portable stations, good scores were achieved by the three stations, each of which operated on both SSB and FM. Best DX from the club QTH was County Tipperary. County Down was also worked and a Galway station was heard briefly, but not for long enough to complete a QSO.

In Waterford, John EI8JA and Gareth EI7FZB, were active from their own QTH's in the city. Stations as far away as Co. Louth were worked. Well done to all who participated.

Solar Alert

Although the actual sunspot numbers and solar flux values have generally declined, new active areas on the sun have rotated into Earth's view, bringing flares and coronal holes and with them geomagnetic storms and dramatic auroral displays.

on April the 5th and 6th, the 10.7 cm solar flux value had to be adjusted because the observatory in Penticton, British Columbia was overwhelmed by energy from solar flares. A solar flare erupted at 1025 UTC on Thursday last and caused a radio blackout across the Atlantic Ocean, Europe, and parts of Western Asia. On Wednesday energy from a pair of coronal mass ejections hit Earth and triggered a severe G4-category geomagnetic storm between around 1500-1800 UTC. This may cause problems with power distribution systems, with surges in voltage and tripping of circuit breakers. Two clouds of charged particles struck Earth's magnetosphere early on Friday the 13th and triggered a strong geomagnetic storm. With this, we can expect long periods of very little HF propagation, but good auroral propagation on VHF. Sky watchers in Ireland and the UK should remain alert for auroral displays after local sunset.

Space News

The Management Team for Amateur Radio on the International Space Station (ARISS) has announced a special amateur radio operation. The Expedition 2 team has received permission from the International Space Station controllers to declare April 12th Cosmonautics Day. The amateur radio operators on board the ISS will be asked to make general QSO's. That day will mark the 40th anniversary of the first human space flight by Soviet Cosmonaut Yuri Gagarin, the 30th anniversary of the Russian Salyut 1, the first space station, and the 20th anniversary of the initial launch of the first reusable space vehicle - the United States space shuttle.

There are currently two radio amateurs on board the International Space Station as part of Expedition 2. They are Russian Commander Yury Usachev, UA9AD, and US astronaut Susan Helms, KC7NHZ. The third crew member, Jim Voss is not licensed but he's working on it!

For more information check the ARISS web site at ariss.gsfc.nasa.gov/ .

IMD Event at Ballybunnion Cancelled

The International Marconi Day Event, which is normally run by a group of EI amateurs from the original Marconi site at Ballybunnion will not take place this year due to the Foot and Mouth situation. This site is available but unfortunately is located on farmland and it has been decided by all those involved to withdraw from the event this year.

DX News

A DXpedition to the island of Tanera Mor in the Summer Isles, North West Scotland will take place from 20th to the 23rd of April 2001. The various references are; IOTA EU92, Islands of Scotland Award SC10, WAB NB90 and QRA IO78. Activity will be on all bands 10 to 80 metres SSB, CW, RTTY and PSK31. Hopefully this year conditions will be better and the operators are looking forward to working lots of stations who require the Summer Isles for IOTA or IOSA. The call sign in operation will be MM0BQI/P for some contest activity and also the special callsign GB5SI (Summer Isles). It is hoped to work many EI stations during the weekend. QSL is 100% direct or via RSGB to Jim Martin, MM0BQI 3 Lismore Avenue Edinburgh, EH8 7DW, SCOTLAND - UK or MM0BQI@theRSGB.net .

Items for inclusion in Echo Ireland should be forwarded to Dave Moore EI4BZ at 021-4353853 in the evenings or at 021-4823172 during office hours. Items can be submitted to Dave by e-mail at ei4bz@eircom.net and you can fax him at 021-

4354113. Items for inclusion in the Radio News should be forwarded to Mark Wall EI7IS at QTHR or via e-mail to ei7is@qsl.net or cyberis@e-merge.ie. Items can also be sent to Mark over the phone at 087-6302026. News can also be submitted via e-mail to news@irts.ie for automatic forwarding to both news services.

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